

REMOTE MAGNETIC ACTIVATION OF HEARING DEVICES

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A magnetic switch assembly for hearing devices designed for remote activation by the user is highly miniaturized with a self-contained latching mechanism. The switch is activated and deactivated by the user via a hand-held magnet placed in proximity to the hearing device. The switch assembly includes a miniature reed switch and a miniature latching magnet affixed directly to one of the reeds or the associated lead wire. Direct attachment minimizes the air gap between the latching magnet and a reed thus enabling latching with only an extremely small magnet. The latching magnet produces a magnetic field of adequate strength to hold the reeds together in electrical contact after the air gap between the reeds is closed by the user's placement of the external hand-held magnet in proximity thereto. But the latching magnet's field is of inadequate strength for unaided closure of the air gap between the reeds. Consequently, once the reeds are closed the latching magnet prevents separation thereof until the reeds are exposed to an external magnetic field of opposite polarity and sufficient strength to overcome the field produced by the latching magnet.